# Minutes

# Attendance

### **Trustees Present:** Michael Barcal, Jason Barrett, Mike Binder, Jack Boyle, Jill Davis, Jay Demetree, John Gol, Kevin Hyde, Allison Korman Shelton, Chris Lazzara, Paul McElroy, Steve Moore, and Nik Patel

## Call to Order

Chair Hyde called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM and conducted a roll call.

## Public Comment

There were no requests for public comment.

## President's Remarks

President Limayem welcomed Trustee Jack Boyle to the Board of Trustees. Trustee Boyle has been a great supporter and advocate for UNF prior to his appointment. Trustee Boyle expressed his excitement to be part of the community and shared that his beliefs align with UNF’s mission, vision, and commitment to student success.

## Post Tenure Review Audit Report

Julia Hann, Chief Audit Executive, presented the Post Tenure Review Internal Audit Report. BOG Regulation 10.003, Post-Tenure Faculty Review, requests each university Board of Trustees to consider the audit report after the report’s publication date.

The scope and method of the audit included verification and completeness in the PTR process. Additionally, the accuracy of the tenured faculty population was reviewed to confirm outcomes and compensation were in accordance with UNF policy and MOU. The report lists the number of tenured faculty in each of four of the performance rating categories, which agrees with the Provost’s report, which was submitted to the Board last month. There are no material issues of noncompliance which warrant a reportable recommendation in this report, and the overall residual risk ranking was assessed as low.

Trustee Binder stated that the Union raised concerns about Dean’s letters during the PTR process. He asked for elaboration on the investigation and findings regarding this matter. President Limayem stated that the Union was sent a letter from the Faculty Committee, which expressed concerns about Dean’s letters and the PTR process. President Limayem indicated that he tasked the Chief Compliance and Ethics Offices, Robyn Blank, to conduct an independent investigation to study the concerns expressed in this letter. The President received a draft report, which will soon be finalized, then publicized and shared with UNF faculty and the Union. President Limayem stated that the investigation did not find any basis for the concerns.

## Tenure Upon Hire – Stephen W. Dittmore, Ph.D., Professor and (Incoming) Dean, College of Education and Human Services

Provost Karen Patterson presented the tenure upon hire of Dr. Stephen Dittmore. Following a national search and strong support by the College faculty, Dr. Stephen Dittmore was selected as Dean of the College of Education and Human Services, beginning July 22, 2024. Dr. Dittmore holds a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Organizational Development from the University of Louisville, and most recently served as tenured Professor and Dean of the College of Education and Health Sciences at Baldwin Wallace University in Berea, Ohio. Prior to that, he was Associate Dean of the College of Education and Health Professions at the University of Arkansas.

Dr. Dittmore’s research centers on the role of athletics within higher education, Olympic and college sports policy and government relations, regulation of sports broadcasting, and the history of baseball. In recent years, his work has been published in several well-respected, peer-reviewed journals. Dr. Dittmore is a seasoned higher education administrator, with expertise in personal management, curriculum development, budget and resource allocation, shared governance, program assessment and accreditation, and strategic planning.

In addition, Dr. Dittmore has an outstanding track record as a successful external funding awardee. In the last academic year, he was co-principal investigator on a five-year $1.2 million *Choose Ohio First Student Scholarship* Funding Award. He crafted a strategy to recruit Clinical Mental Health counseling students that resulted in a $230,000 grant through the Ohio Department of Education Behavioral Health workforce expansion program. In Arkansas, he oversaw college research endeavors that included approximately 100 external awards, totaling more than $20 million in annual funding.

Chair Hyde asked for a MOTION to approve the tenure upon hire of Dr. Stephen Dittmore. Trustee Patel made a MOTION to APPROVE and Trustee Demetree SECONDED. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

## 2025-2026 Legislative Budget Request

President Limayem presented UNF’s 2025-2026 Legislative Budget Request which requires Board of Trustee approval prior to submission to the Board of Governors.

Where UNF is now:

* Last two years: record funding for UNF LBRs Totaled $30 million recurring, $19 million nonrecurring \*
* Requests remained consistent with strategic plan over past two years to address issues and prepare for growth to meet workforce demands:
	+ 2023-24 Request = $52,595,192, Allocation = $25,000,000
	+ 2024-25 Request = $25,000,000, Allocation = $5 million recurring, $14 nonrecurring
* Major portion of allocation was used to provide significant raises for faculty and staff retention.

*\* PECO allocations not included here as those requests are funded through different process.*

President Limayem shared how UNF is aligned with regional needs and priorities:

* UNF is #1 among state universities with the highest percentage of bachelor’s graduates employed in Florida.
* 80% of UNF graduates stay in Florida; 70% stay in the region.
* UNF has a strong ROI — nearly an $11 return for every state dollar invested.
* In FY 2022, UNF’s economic contribution in Florida exceeded $1.375 billion.

Additionally, the focus areas of UNF’s Strategic Plan align with JAXUSA Partnership’s priorities.

President Limayem emphasized the continued efforts with business communities and various stakeholders to ensure that UNF meets the demand for talent. He shared a few examples:

* As the only public university in the region, UNF is the premier provider of talent for Northeast Florida.
* To effectively address North Florida’s growing talent needs, UNF’s strategic plan includes growing enrollment to 25,000 by 2028.
* Supply chain includes all five of UNF’s strategic areas of focus. UNF’s expertise and offerings in this area help differentiate us from other SUS schools:
	+ UNF offers bachelor’s and master’s programs in fintech.
	+ UNF offers the only bachelor’s advanced manufacturing engineering degree in Florida \*
	+ UNF is well-known for its Crowley Center for Transportation & Logistics
* Research at UNF is focused on finding real-world solutions with local and global impacts.
* UNF’s location provides students with experience working with top industries.

*\* The advanced manufacturing degree at UNF provides the expertise needed to develop products for aerospace, military technology, and healthcare industries, including semiconductors, microelectronics, and biomedical devices.*

President Limayem stated UNF’s Areas of Strategic Emphasis are:

1. Advanced Manufacturing
2. Coastal / Port Resilience
3. Data Science, Cybersecurity, IT
4. Healthcare, Biotech, Health Sciences
5. Transportation & Logistics

President Limayem shared how UNF continues to support Northeast Florida and the state. He provided examples of publications and statistics:

* Jacksonville is the 2nd hottest job market in the country — Wall Street Journal
* Jacksonville was the 4th fastest growing city in the U.S. between July 2022 and July 2023 — U.S. Census Bureau, May 2024
* #4 Largest Growth in Employment Gains (#2 for MSAs with populations over 1 million) — U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, February 2023
* JAXPORT, with a $33 billion output, is #1 for cargo shipping in Florida.
* Florida is poised to become one of the Top 5 manufacturing states by 2030.
* Florida’s manufacturing GDP has grown from $43.5 billion in 2014 to $73 billion in 2022 – nearly 70% in under a decade.

President Limayem shared data about the E&G funding per student (per full-time equivalent, FTE). In comparison to the 11 other SUS universities, UNF currently falls in the middle. However, as UNF grows to an anticipated 25,000 students by 2028, the funding per student will decrease without additional recurring funds. Therefore, ongoing investments are crucial to support the necessary faculty and staff for successful strategic growth.

Trustee McElroy asked for a sense of how much recurring funding is needed on an annual basis to stay in the current position. President Limayem stated that UNF’s 2025-26 LBR remains consistent to support the strategic plan for growth to 25,000 by 2028 with focus on areas of strategic emphasis. By 2025, UNF will need $20,000,000 recurring and $10,000,000 nonrecurring, for a total of $30,000,000.

Recurring funds will be used for recruitment of additional faculty with a focus on areas of strategic emphasis and cluster hires related to supply chain, logistics and cybersecurity, merit-based scholarships, graduate school program enhancements, and undergraduate program alignment. Furthermore, student services will continue to support enrollment growth to 25,000 by 2028 through the hiring of additional advisors, mental health counselors, IT personnel, and campus police.

Nonrecurring funds will be allocated for needed research infrastructure and lab upgrades. This will position UNF for the R1 Research status, as the strategic plan indicates.

Trustee Korman Shelton expressed concern about the performance-based funding measurements released by the Florida Board of Governors, which had placed UNF on a watch list. She indicated that it is risky to approach the legislature and that efforts should instead be directed towards improving areas of deficiency. Trustee Korman Shelton recalled a time when UNF had a high 4-year graduation rate, which has since declined, leaving only four schools with lower rates. With the $31 million allocation, she suggested that focusing on enhancing performance-based funding could have ensured more consistent financial support. Trustee Korman Shelton emphasized UNF’s approach of preparing students for job opportunities in Jacksonville, contrasting with other schools’ broader focus. However, Trustee Korman Shelton expressed difficulty with the current LBR, citing concerns over performance-based funding and the growing influence of the Board of Governors. Trustee Korman Shelton advocated for addressing deficiencies, particularly in academic progress, rather than pursuing increased enrollment or new ventures like cybersecurity, which is also being targeted by other Florida institutions. Trustee Korman Shelton stated that she was unable to support the LBR due to these concerns.

President Limayem acknowledged Trustee Korman Shelton’s concerns about UNF’s position on the watch list. He noted this was previously discussed extensively with the Board. The President indicated that is important to understand the criteria and mechanisms behind the funding calculations. Despite an actual improvement in UNF’s performance, the overall score has decreased. President Limayem summarized the process and stated that there are two methods to accumulate points for performance-based funding: improvement points and excellence points. An institution can earn a full 10 points for showing significant improvement in one of the metrics even though they may or may not have achieved an outcome that would qualify for excellence points. Despite an increase in our performance on PBF Metric 1, the overall score decreased because we earned improvement points for that same metric last year.

President Limayem confidently conveyed to the BOG that UNF is in a strong position, backed by specific metrics indicating growth rather than decline. He highlighted an anticipated milestone for the next year, aiming to surpass the UNF historical record for the best Academic Progress Rate (APR). UNF is actively taking measures to improve each metric, ensuring that the focus is not solely on new ventures but also on current performance. In addition, President Limayem emphasized that UNF has been working with unprecedented dedication and focus on these metrics, which is evident from the V-shaped recovery in many of the performance curves. Regardless of past challenges, such as the pandemic, which led to a temporary loss of focus, the President reassured that UNF is now working harder than ever. He expects to see a positive trend in the numbers starting next year, which will contribute to enhancing UNF’s overall score and securing performance-based funding.

President Limayem highlighted the creation of a new cabinet position, Vice President of Strategy and Innovation, held by Dr. Paul Eason, to ensure progress of the Strategic Plan across different units. Furthermore, the Provost and her team diligently monitor the performance metrics daily through dashboards for actionable intelligence. The president emphasized that performance-based funding, although a part of their budget, is not sufficient funding to support all the needs of the university.

Addressing Trustee Korman Shelton’s question about growth, President Limayem explained that growth is a key component of UNF’s Strategic Plan, which was developed through extensive consultation. The President stated that strategic growth is essential for UNF to remain relevant and to contribute to workforce development in the region and state. President Limayem expressed confidence that UNF can grow both in size and quality, thereby avoiding irrelevance and meeting the demands for workforce development.

Trustee McElroy noted that the President eloquently cited all the activities. Trustee McElroy stated that UNF is working smarter through investments and retooling enrollment significantly, in terms of recruitment and the student-screening process. Additionally, the full engagement of the executive cabinet and faculty related to student success has been crucial to enrollment and moving towards the four-year plan.

Trustee Demetree agreed with President Limayem’s point that striving for improvement is a continuous process. He emphasized that while it’s important to constantly seek betterment, there is also a need to actively pursue financial support from the legislature.

Chair Hyde stated that Trustee Korman Shelton raises valid points. However, he is confident that the President and his team will have success with the LBR.

Chair Hyde asked for a MOTION to approve UNF’s 2025-2026 Legislative Budget Request. Trustee Demetree made a MOTION to APPROVE, and Trustee Barrett SECONDED. The motion was approved by a 12 to 1 vote, with Trustee Korman Shelton voting “no.”

## Adjournment

Chair Hyde adjourned the meeting at 12:42 PM.